REMARKS

Claims 1-30 were examined in the Outstanding Office Action mailed on 10/02/2006. All the claims were rejected. By virtue of this amendment, claims 1, 11 and 21 are sought to be amended to further define the invention. The amendments are believed not to introduce new matter and their entry is respectfully requested. Reconsideration is respectfully requested further in view of the below remarks.

Claim Rejections 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-9, 11-19, 21-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by US Patent Number 6,618,745 issued to Christensen *et al* (hereafter Christensen). The rejections are believed to be rendered moot at least in view of the foregoing amendments, for reasons described below.

Currently amended claim 1 recites:

> Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A method of providing a connection between a first device and a second device ***contained in a process automation system, said process automation system also containing a host controller designed to control operation of said first device and said second device, wherein each of said first device and said second device is implemented as a separate physical unit from said host controller***, said method comprising:
>
> establishing said connection between said first device and said second device;
>
> storing in a third device a first plurality data elements necessary for re-establishing said connection;
>
> receiving ***from said second device a second data element when said second device is reinitialized***, wherein said second data element is contained in said device after said second device is reinitialized; and
>
> reestablishing said connection between said first device and said second device after said reinitialization by modifying at least one parameter value in at least one of said first device and said second device based on said first plurality of data elements and said second data element.
>
> (Currently Amended claim 1, ***Emphasis Added***)

Thus method in accordance with claim 1 operates to provide connectivity between a first device and a second device, which are controlled by a host controller in a process automation system. The two devices are provided as separate physical units from the host controller. The second device sends a second data element when reinitialized and the data element is used to reestablish the position between the first device and the second device.

The art of record does not disclose or reasonably suggest several of the features of amended claim 1.

In particular, it is Applicants position that the host controller of currently amended claim 1 is akin to Controller 18 (shown in Figures 1, 2, of 5) of Christensen. Furthermore, Christensen relates to allowing the formation of a control loop having function blocks in a controller and in field devices. In other words, the control loops allowed in Christensen are between a field device and a controller 18 (not two devices controlled by the host controller, as recited in currently amended claim 1).

Accordingly, currently amended independent claim 1 is allowable over Christensen. The remaining two currently amended independent claims 11 and 21 are also allowable at least for similar reasons. The dependent claims are also allowable as depending from the corresponding allowable base claims.

Original dependent claim 12 is independently allowable in reciting, "... said second device contains a plurality of objects providing said connection, wherein ***said second data element comprises an index indicating a memory location*** where one of said plurality of objects is stored." (***Emphasis Added***).

In other words, the control station recited in independent claim 11 receives an index indicating a memory location where an object is stored.

There is no disclosure or suggestion that such internal information is made available to external systems (for example, to linking device 28 of Christensen).

In support of such an assertion, the portion of Christensen (in addition to Figure 2 of Christensen) relied upon in the Outstanding Office Action is first reproduced below:

> Because the Fieldbus message specification layer supplies standardized communications for the user layer, specific Fieldbus message specification communication services are defined for each type of object described above. For example, the Fieldbus message specification layer includes object dictionary services

> that allow a user to read an object dictionary of a device. The object dictionary stores object descriptions that describe or identify each of the objects (such as block objects) of a device.
> (Lines 48-55, Col 6 of Christensen)

The above quoted text appears to merely describe the various capabilities of Fieldbus message specification. But nowhere does the above text or Figure 2 of Christensen (relied upon in the Outstanding Office Action) disclose or reasonably suggest that the claimed index (to a memory location where an object is stored) is sent to linking device 28.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to point to the specific text (or portion of the Figure) of Christensen which discloses or suggests that the claimed index is sent from one system to the other when the second system is initialized.

Accordingly claim 2 is independently allowable over Christensen. The remaining two dependent claims 2 and 22 are also allowable at least for similar reasons.

Conclusion

Accordingly all the objections and rejections of record are thus believed to be overcome. Continuation of examination is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned representative at 707.356.4172 if it is believed that an interview might be useful for any reason.

Respectfully submitted,
/Narendra Reddy Thappeta/
Signature
Date: December 8, 2006
Printed Name: Narendra Reddy Thappeta
Attorney for Applicant
Registration Number: 41,416